



Each year, INL provides volunteers to support the Salvation Army's Christmas Bell Ringing program. Here Lab Director John Grossenbacher poses with Community Outreach Coordinator Lori Priest.

INL is proud to give back to the community

by Lori Priest, *INL Communications*

IDAHO FALLS — Since its contract began in February 2005, Idaho National Laboratory has provided more than \$3 million in corporate funding through Battelle Energy Alliance (BEA) to numerous educational, philanthropic and technology-based economic development programs.

Over this three-year period, INL's education program office has contributed more than \$1.2 million to enhance local and regional K-12 programs that promote science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) to create awareness and to encourage students to pursue careers in these areas.

In 2006, Skyline High School and Eagle Rock Junior High were selected to host the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) — a pilot high school math, science and technology program. PLTW's state-of-the-art training program centers on developing better problem-solving skills by immersing students in real-world engineering problems. BEA, in partnership with Idaho Falls School District 91, has committed to invest a total of \$120,000 over five years to PLTW.

As part of its educational contribution, BEA has awarded 120 mini-grants totaling more than \$212,000 to teachers throughout Idaho. In addition, \$10,000 is given each year to the Idaho Falls Mayor's Scholarship Fund for local junior high and high school students.

BEA provides corporate funding for teacher professional development, high school and teacher summer internships, and the INL Scholastic Tournament. INL also stages the Hispanic Youth Symposium (HYS) each year. This symposium encourages Latino teens to pursue education and brings regional universities together to offer scholarships to participants. In 2008 alone, these universities awarded \$2.2 million in scholarships to more than 130 Idaho students. INL also gives \$10,000 each year to the Eastern Idaho Technical College (EITC) Foundation for EITC student scholarships.



INL volunteers help plant landscaping for a Team INL project.



INL employee Nolin Rhodehouse and a team of volunteers remodeled the computer room at The Haven shelter in Idaho Falls.

INL funds philanthropic projects that focus on community, health and human services, and culture. Over \$600,000 in corporate funding has been given throughout the past three years to support more than 100 agencies and programs.

In addition to supporting the annual United Way fund drive for BEA employees, which has brought in over \$949,000 in the past three years, BEA provided an additional \$150,000 in corporate contributions to the United Way of Bonneville County. The total contributions for this year's (2009) United Way campaign have not been finalized but the expectation is that they will exceed \$300,000. BEA also provides funding to the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Center, Development Workshop, American Red Cross, Salvation Army, Idaho Meth Project and numerous nonprofit agencies that feed, clothe or provide shelter and services to the less fortunate in surrounding communities.

Another way BEA provides support to the community is through Team INL — an employee volunteer program. The goal of Team INL is to provide a little bit of funding to help employees make a difference in their communities. The funding is often used to purchase building materials, paint, sand, essential items and clothing. To date, BEA employees and volunteer groups have completed more than 70 Team INL projects. Projects include remodeling the Head Start building in Blackfoot, painting the Development Workshop building's exterior and building a rappelling wall for children with cancer during their week's stay at Camp Magical Moments in Idaho's Swan Valley. Team INL has also organized two sitewide food drives for the Idaho Falls Community Food Bank bringing in over 15,000 pounds of canned food and \$4,000 in donations.

During the holiday season, BEA supports the annual site-wide Christmas for Families program. This year, BEA provided food and supplies for nearly 90 families with more than 350 children. And

BEA employees adopted the families to provide gifts for the children. BEA also gave holiday donations to the Soup Kitchen, St. Vincent de Paul, Marine's Toys for Tots and Butte County's Wish Upon a Star program so that there will be food, toys and essentials available to help those in need. And each year, Team INL provides volunteers to support the Salvation Army's Christmas Bell Ringing program, which raises money to help provide food and shelter to the less fortunate in our community.

The INL technology partnerships-economic development organization provides just over \$275,000, plus \$100,000 in royalty funds and in-kind services, each year to technology-based economic development partners. One of these partners is Idaho TechConnect, the state's first and only private-public non-profit organization focused solely on the development, transfer and commercialization of technology. TechConnect was fully deployed in April 2006 and it bridges the gap between ideas, research and patents, and enabling people, money and facilities. Six regional offices work with entrepreneurs and companies to turn Idaho's ideas into Idaho's businesses, create products, establish and grow research and development programs, seek funding, and compete in the global marketplace.

Another partnership has been developed with the Idaho Economic Development Association (IEDA). IEDA is a trade association of economic development professionals and affiliated entities whose purpose is to enhance and elevate the practice of economic development and to promote sustainable business growth for Idaho's economic vitality and increased standard of living. IEDA and INL strive to elevate the awareness of and implementation of tech-based economic development strategies through the state. The project emphasizes education for economic development professionals and a media campaign to highlight Idaho's technology-based industry successes.



INL employees have organized food drives to support the Idaho Falls Community Food Bank.



INL volunteers help Olympians during a 2006 Special Olympics meet in Pocatello.

Idaho TechConnect, INL, the Idaho Economic Development Association, the Department of Commerce, and other public and private organizations across the state organized TechLaunch, an educational event that teaches entrepreneurs how to pitch their ideas to investors. Entrepreneurs from across Idaho present their business to a panel of judges representing various aspects of the financing food chain, including venture capitalists, angel investors and commercial bankers. Over the course of this event, 37 companies have participated, raising a total of more than \$33 million in research, development and investment funds. This year, the event also featured the winners of Idaho's university business plan competitions.

INL has also taken a lead role in the Idaho Entrepreneurial Project to grow Idaho's entrepreneurial economy, identifying resources and coordinating efforts. This program brings individuals at every grade level through the curriculum, identifying internship opportunities and equipping students with skills to compete in today's economy. The end result will be entrepreneurially educated workers who are able to own and operate their own businesses or apply their talents to INL or one of Idaho's existing companies, helping them to grow and expand.

In addition to the economic development programs, INL has provided \$315,000 in technical assistance to the community. The INL Technical Assistance Program provides INL technical expertise to address a variety of needs of state and local governments, and regional small businesses each year. The requesting organization can receive up to 40 hours of laboratory employee time at no cost to them to address technical needs that cannot readily be met by commercially available resources in the region.

Ninety-two projects have been completed in the past three years. Projects include structural evaluation of a potential building for the proposed Family Justice Center, a wastewater treatment facility evaluation for Idaho City and a fabricated quartz glass furnace for the University of Idaho by INL's glass-blowing specialist. Talented and dedicated INL employees serving in key advisory positions truly made a difference and represent a significant monetary investment in the laboratory's home state.

INL is proud to be able to make a positive difference in the lives of many. During this time of economic challenge, INL will continue to do its part to support education programs, find avenues to help the less fortunate and support the economic development of the state.

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